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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant(s): Kocher et al.
Serial No.: 10/624,288
For: OPTICAL CONNECTING DEVICE FOR COUPLING
CONNECTORS TO AN APPARATUS WITH MULTIPLE
PORTS
Filed: July 21, 2003
Examiner: Chandrika Prasad
Art Unit: 2839
Confirmation No.: 7393
Customer No.: 27,623

Attorney Docket No.: US 20 02 0408

**Mail Stop Amendment
COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450**

Dear Sir:

AMENDMENT TRANSMITTAL

We are enclosing a Request for Reconsideration with copy of previously submitted drawings (5 sheets – Figs. 1 through 7) in response to the communication dated June 21, 2004 in the above-identified application.

Petition for extension of time pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.136 and 1.137 is hereby made if, and to the extent, required. The fee for this extension of time is calculated to be \$ _____ to extend the time for filing this response until _____.

The fee for any change in number of claims has been calculated as shown below.

CLAIMS AS AMENDED						
	Claims Remaining After Amendment		Highest Number Previously Paid	Present Extra	Rate	
Total Claims	19	Minus	20	0	x \$18.00	\$
Independent Claims	3	Minus	3	0	x \$86.00	\$
MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM FEE				x \$290.00 = \$		

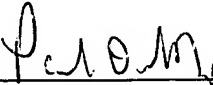
The total fee for this amendment, including claim changes and any extension of time is calculated to be \$ 0.00 .

 A check in the amount of \$ 0.00 is attached.

X The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 and 1.17 which may be required with this communication or during the entire pendency of the application, or credit any overpayment, to **Deposit Account No. 01-0467**. A duplicate copy of this Form is enclosed.

September 20, 2004

Date


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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS CORRESPONDENCE IS BEING DEPOSITED WITH THE U.S. POSTAL SERVICE AS FIRST CLASS MAIL IN AN ENVELOPE ADDRESSED TO: MAIL STOP AMENDMENT, COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS, P.O. BOX 1450, ALEXANDRIA, VA 22313-1450, ON September 20, 2004 .

Joanne A. Romaniello

NAME


SIGNATURE

9/20/04

DATE



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REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

Mail Stop Amendment
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

In reply to the first Office Action dated June 21, 2004, Applicants respectfully submit the following response.

Claims 1-19 are pending in the application. Applicants respectfully submit, for reasons that will become apparent below, that the rejection of claims 1-19 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) is erroneous, and should be withdrawn. Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

The Office Action has objected to the drawings filed on July 21, 2003, particularly Figure 1. The Office Action

indicates that reference numerals 9 and 11 of Figure 1 point to the same part and are not consistent with Figures 2 and 3. Applicants filed replacement formal drawings on December 23, 2003. For the convenience of the Examiner, a copy of the formal drawings is enclosed. It is evident from the formal drawings that reference numerals 9 and 11 do not point to the same part and are not inconsistent with Figures 2 and 3. Applicants request that the objection be withdrawn.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-14 and 16-19 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,418,983 to Bowen et al., hereinafter referred to as "Bowen".

Claim 1 provides for a connecting device. The connecting device provides an optical connection between an apparatus having a plurality of apparatus ports for receiving and/or sending optical signals, and at least one optical fiber being coupled to a connector. The connecting device includes a support plate supporting at least two adapters. Each adapter includes an adapter contact for providing a connection with one of the apparatus ports, and a connector contact for providing a connection with the connector.

Bowen discloses a connector for axially aligning a pair of optical fibers (col. 1, lines 51-52). Referring to Figure 7 of Bowen, the connector includes a duplex receptacle 74 having bores 73, 75 therethrough (col. 7, lines 12-15). A duplex plug 58, for terminating a pair of optical fibers 60, 62 in bores 73, 75, includes forward projecting plug members 64, 66 that are encased jointly in an elastomeric plug body 68 (col. 7, lines 1-6).

Examiner equates plug members 64, 66 described in Bowen with connectors as recited in claim 1, and also equates bores 73, 75 with ports as recited in claim 1. Examiner also equates plug body 68 described in Bowen with a support plate as recited in claim 1.

Bowen discloses plug body 68 and plug members 64 and 66 that **connect directly** with bores 73 and 75. Applicants have not found Bowen to disclose any intervening **adapters** having a connection with the connectors, and furthermore Examiner has not indicated a feature of Bowen that Examiner considers to be an adapter. Because Bowen fails to disclose or suggest adapters, Bowen therefore fails to disclose "at least two adapters, each adapter comprises an adapter contact adapted for providing a connection with one of the apparatus ports and a connector contact adapted for providing a connection with the connector", as recited in claim 1. Thus, Bowen does not anticipate claim 1.

Independent claims 17 and 19 include recitals similar to claim 1. Therefore, for reasoning similar to that provided above in support of claim 1, claims 17 and 19 are not anticipated by Bowen.

Claims 2-14 and 16 depend from claim 1, and claim 18 depends from claim 17. By virtue of these dependencies, claims 2-14, 16 and 18 are also not anticipated by Bowen.

For the reason set forth above, it is submitted that the rejection of claims 1-14 and 16-18 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by Bowen is erroneous. Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 1-14 and 16-18 be withdrawn.

The Office Action rejects claim 15 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,530,787 to Arnett, hereinafter referred to as "Arnett".

Claim 15 provides for a connecting device. The connecting device provides an optical connection between an apparatus having a plurality of apparatus ports for receiving and/or sending optical signals, and at least one optical fiber being coupled to a connector. The connecting device includes a support plate supporting at least two adapters. Each adapter includes an adapter contact for providing a connection with one of the apparatus ports, and a connector contact for providing a connection with the connector.

Arnett discloses a curved guide for optical fibers (col. 2, line 19). The guide includes an elongated curved supporting member (col. 2, line 20). On one end of the supporting member is a mounting member for mounting the guide to a fiber connector or to an adapter collar on a patch panel (col. 2, lines 25-28). Referring to Figures 4 and 5, a duplex SC coupler, which Applicants believe is designated by reference numeral 75, is mounted in collar 70 into which two SC connectors 73 are inserted (col. 5, lines 52-53). Referring to Figure 6, a patch panel assembly is disclosed which includes a patch panel 76 having a plurality of apertures 77 therein (col. 5, lines 62-64). A fiber guide is also shown that is mounted to an adapter 78 containing a single SC coupler 79 (col. 5, lines 65-66).

Examiner equates collar 70 described in Arnett with a support plate as provided in claim 15.